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ABSTRACT

These fact sheets were developed as part of the Child Care Partnership Project, a multi-year technical assistance effort. The Partnership Project provides a series of technical assistance resources and materials to support the development and strengthening of public-private partnerships to improve the quality and supply of child care. The fact sheets provide information about a variety of partnerships and include tips for success, along with selected partnership examples. The eight 2-page fact sheets are: (1) What Is a Public-Private Partnership?; (2) Child Care Loan Funds; (3) Engaging Diverse Partners; (4) Partnerships for Child Care at Nontraditional Hours; (5) Partnerships for Provider Education; (6) Business Roundtables, Coalitions, and Commissions; (7) School-Age Child Care Partnerships; and (8) Partnerships To Support Statewide System Development. Following introductory text discussing the fact sheet's topic and offering examples of various partnerships addressing the issue, each sheet also contains a concise list of tips for success and contact information. (EV)

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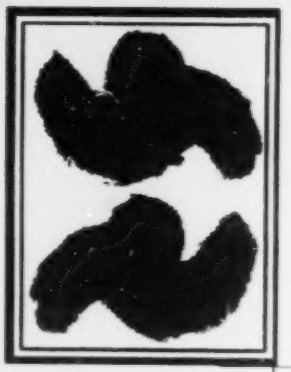

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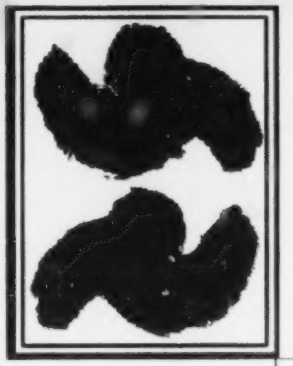
The Child Care Partnership Project

Fact Sheets of Public-Private Partnerships for Child Care

PS 027804

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Child Care Bureau



Fact Sheets

1. What is a Public-Private Partnership?
2. Child Care Loan Funds
3. Engaging Diverse Partners
4. Partnerships for Child Care at Nontraditional Hours
5. Partnerships for Provider Education
6. Tips for Success
7. School-Age Child Care Partnerships
8. Partnerships to Support Statewide System Development

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Child Care Bureau

Innovative Approaches:

What is a Public-Private Partnership?

Public-private partnerships have become an important vehicle for drawing together the resources and know-how that are needed to expand and improve child care in the United States. Partnerships are formed when citizens and organizations join together to improve quality, increase supply, and/or improve the accessibility of child care in a state or community.

This is the first in a series of fact sheets about public-private child care partnerships. The information in this series has been collected as part of the Child Care Partnership Project, a joint initiative of The Finance Project, National Governors' Association, and Families and Work Institute, supported by the Child Care Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This fact sheet defines and describes the characteristics of successful public-private child care partnerships. Additional fact sheets in this series provide information about a variety of partnerships and include tips for success, along with selected partnership examples.

What is a Public-Private Partnership?

A public-private partnership exists when the public sector–federal, state, local and/or tribal officials or agencies–joins with the private sector–families, employers, philanthropies, media, civic groups, and/or service providers–to attain a shared goal.

Characteristics

Although each partnership is unique, they typically share some common characteristics.

- They bring together public- and private-sector partners.
- Partners work together toward shared goals or objectives.
- Each partner contributes time, money, expertise, and/or other resources.
- Decision-making and management responsibilities are shared among the partners.

Principles for Success

Successful partnerships follow similar principles that guide and support their activities. These principles are relevant to a variety of initiatives.

- **Have clear goals**. Partnerships should define goals at the outset in order to ensure clarity among partners, achieve desired results, and help guide the partnership through obstacles and challenges.
- **Aim to achieve positive results and regularly measure progress**. Regularly measuring results allows partnerships to assess whether activities and strategies are meeting goals, and what changes should be made to make partnership efforts more effective.
- **Involve families and account for their needs and preferences when developing programs and services**. Families are the ultimate consumers of child care. For services to be successful, they must address families' needs and be culturally and linguistically appropriate. This requires that families be involved in both designing and evaluating partnership programs.

- **Be broad-based and include key stakeholders from the beginning**. Partnerships are most effective when they are able to draw from a broad range of perspectives, resources, and expertise. Partnerships can gain broader public and private support for their efforts through the constituencies that each partner represents and supports.
- **Involve powerful champions who make the partnership goals visible to the public**. Success requires leaders in all sectors who act as change agents by clearly communicating the goals of the partnership and building a broad base of support for it.
- **Establish clear governance structures that define partner roles and responsibilities**. Establishing an effective governance structure is essential to successful partnership management. It is equally important to define the various roles that partners will play and to make sure that all the partners understand and accept these roles.
- **Set and adhere to ground rules that guide the partnership in its work**. Partnerships should begin with mutually agreed-upon ground rules. Such ground rules might include how partners will define and measure success, conduct meetings, communicate with each other, share information, and make decisions.
- **Be flexible, adopt an entrepreneurial mindset, and adapt to changing conditions and resources**. Partnerships must be able to change in response to emerging needs and to take advantage of new opportunities.
- **Enable all partners to benefit by drawing on their strengths and contributions**. Each partner brings different strengths, knowledge, and resources to the partnership. Sensitivity to these attributes will cement working relationships among partners and allow the partnership to draw on a broad range of resources and expertise.
- **Work to maintain momentum and sustain the efforts over time**. The most successful partnerships plan right from the beginning for how they will maintain momentum and sustain their efforts. Planning for financial sustainability, celebrating successes, and creating a sense of shared ownership and collective purpose increase the likelihood that partners will stay involved over the long run.

For More Information:

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Innovative Approaches:

Child Care Loan Funds

Child care providers who have the skills, education, and desire to care for children still need money to open and operate their businesses. Finding the money to operate a child care business is extremely difficult due, in large part, to the small economic return in this business. Commercial banks often are reluctant to provide loans because they see child care as a high-risk investment.

In recent years, groups of public officials and private lenders have joined forces to make low-cost loans available to child care providers. Some of the loan fund partnerships are limited to one city, while others encompass one or more states. In either case, these funds provide a cost-effective alternative to standard bank or commercial loans that require higher monthly payments.

In order to help providers succeed, loan fund partnerships generally provide technical assistance in addition to financial assistance. This assistance helps providers develop the skills that are needed to manage their business, and to secure financing to build or renovate their facilities. The following funds are a sampling of the increasing number of child care loan funds throughout the country:

- **San Francisco Facilities Fund**. To address the lack of affordable child care in the San Francisco area, the Mayor's Office initiated a loan fund to improve center-based and family child care facilities. The Fund, which receives support from local foundations, corporations, and the city's general fund, is managed by a national low-income housing organization headquartered in the city. The Fund provides grants and zero-interest start-up loans, as well as technical assistance, to help providers secure financing and get started. The Fund also holds quarterly technical assistance workshops to help providers improve the quality of child care. (Contact Amy Kershaw at (415) 554-8967 for more information.)

- **Child Care Fund of Vermont**. Vermont established a loan fund in 1995 as part of a larger effort to improve the quality of child care in the state. The Carnegie Corporation of New York provided the initial funding, but other private foundations, individuals, and businesses throughout Vermont have since supplemented the Fund. The Fund makes loans to communities to expand child care information and referral services to disadvantaged families, and to create incentives for providers to increase staff preparation and compensation. In addition to lending money, the Fund also conducts a statewide public education campaign emphasizing the importance of children's early years and the benefits of high-quality child care. (Contact Julie Cadwallader-Staub at (802) 863-4188 for more information.)

- **Coastal Enterprises Child Care Development Project**. Coastal Enterprises is a private, nonprofit, community development corporation working to increase both the supply of high-quality, affordable child care and the economic self-sufficiency of providers in Maine. The Project views child care providers as small businesses in need of growth capital. It secures resources from the Ford Foundation, the Small Business Association's Micro-Loan program, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Economic Development fund. Using these resources, CEI has leveraged additional local resources to make loans to both family child care providers and centers serving low-income children, particularly in rural areas. The Project teaches providers about

federal and state sources of funding, provides technical assistance to providers developing funding proposals, and teaches business management techniques. The Project also issues loans to support the education and training of providers. (Contact Phebe Royer at (207) 882-7552 for more information.)

- **St. Joseph County Child Care Symposium Financing Initiative**. In St. Joseph County, Indiana, a public-private partnership was created to address local child care problems as part of the statewide Child Care Symposium Financing Initiative. The local partnership leverages money from the state to provide low-cost child care loans for start-up funds and provider education, or to refurbish facilities so that they meet state licensing requirements. (Contact Carole Stein at (317) 232-1148 for more information.)

Tips for Success

The Child Care Partnership Project has identified the following lessons from successful child care loan funds:

Use a nonprofit fiscal intermediary to administer and manage loan funds. A fiscal intermediary is usually selected because it has the credibility, resources, and know-how to manage and track funds. It also is less vulnerable to changes in the partnership or political leadership. Allowing a third-party intermediary to manage the loan funds can build confidence in the fund's administration.

Banks can play a key role. Under the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), large and limited-purpose banks are required to help meet the credit and development needs of the communities in which they operate. Child care lending is one of the allowable activities stated in the Act. Some banks, such as Providian Financial, have funded child care initiatives as part of their CRA economic development requirements.

Remember that money is not the only or most important factor in engaging business partners. Business can provide a variety of resources to partnerships, including leadership, expertise, and access to other business partners and policymakers. Although funding is important, it may be better to establish the goals of the partnership before focusing on raising the funds.

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Innovative Approaches:

Engaging Diverse Partners

Public-private partnerships are an increasingly viable and popular strategy for improving supports and services in many areas, including child care. They are formed for a variety of reasons, including the reality that no one sector or group can effectively address the need for quality child care services. In order to understand how and why partnerships are able to effectively mobilize public and private resources to increase and improve child care, it is critical to recognize that each prospective partner has a unique set of reasons for participating.

Typical motivations of partners include the following:

- **Families** continue to need and seek affordable child care that enhances child development, school readiness, and well-being. Families also need and seek education and care in a variety of settings that reflect diverse family and community cultures, languages, values, and work schedules.
- **Government** is providing child care assistance to working parents through the tax code and subsidies to low-income families. Government is looking to the private sector for leadership, technical expertise, and innovative ways to finance vital community services, because of growing pressure to find new and better ways of doing business. Government also looks to private-sector initiatives and leadership for stability and continuity as elected and appointed public-sector leaders change.
- **Employers** are recognizing the benefits of addressing the work-life needs of their employees in order to attract and retain the most qualified workers and to enhance their productivity. Employers also understand that their future financial well-being depends on the economic viability of their communities and that quality child care is an essential ingredient to a healthy economic climate. Although many employers are enthusiastic partners in efforts to create and improve child care, their resources are limited and they, too, seek the benefit of sharing costs with other employers and public-sector partners.
- **Philanthropies** are seeking to leverage their investments to foster systemic improvements in the way that states and communities address the needs of children and families. New information about the importance of early childhood brain development has also caused some philanthropies to invest in initiatives that support the healthy development of young children, including improving the quality and availablility of child care. Other philanthropies are investing in child care as economic development, youth development, or poverty alleviation strategies.
- **Educators, Child Care Providers, and Health and Human Service Professionals** are seeking support from both the public and private sectors in order to increase and improve community-based care, and to meet the health, housing, employment, or other needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families. They are also interested in finding ways to share knowledge and resources that help them improve the quality of the services they provide.

- **Community and Civic Organizations** seek similar positive results in delivering effective, efficient services to children and their families. Increasingly, they understand that investing in quality child care is an important strategy for attracting and retaining businesses; preparing children for a productive future in school and work; reducing future dependence on public assistance; and reducing crime.

- **Unions** seek quality child care for their members' children and for all young children. Unions are also concerned with promoting a state or community's economic vitality, and they consider community resources such as child care essential to their members' ability to work.

The most successful partnerships understand and accommodate these motivations, and shape partnership goals and activities to benefit all of the partners.

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Innovative Approaches:

Partnerships for Child Care at Nontraditional Hours

Today's job market and 24-hour global economy require many employees to work shifts that begin or end before or after most child care programs open or close their doors. According to the Families and Work Institute's 1998 report on the changing workforce, at least one-third of employees are required to work nights, while fewer than 10 percent of child care centers and family child care homes operate during these hours. For parents who work nights, weekends, or holidays, finding quality child care can be a nightmare. For partnerships, the challenge is to find providers and facilities that accommodate overnight care; to staff programs during these hours; and to create activities for children on weekends and during school holidays.

Few partnerships focus exclusively on providing 24-hour care, but many have found that it is a desperately needed service for those who work in factories, telecommunications, hospitals, hotels, and other round-the-clock industries. The following initiatives represent a sampling of public-private partnerships that address child care during nontraditional hours.

- **1199/Employer Child Care Fund**. A collective bargaining agreement between employers and the 1199 Health Care Workers Union in New York City started the fund. It now offers a variety of child care services, including a child care center; vouchers to members for child care and summer camp; and resource and referral services. In addition, due to a contract requirement that members work every other weekend, the Fund established a weekend cultural program for children. The Fund partners with other public and private organizations, such as the Harlem School of the Arts, to provide enriching activities as a part of weekend care programs. (Contact Carol Joyner at (212) 564-2220 for more information.)

- **Employer's Child Care Alliance**. A group of business and government employers, concerned about the lack of child care in rural Alabama, started the Alliance. It provides a variety of services, including child care resource and referral; provider education; assistance with child care program accreditation; and after-school and summer youth programs that take place in Boys and Girls Clubs, churches, parks, and recreation facilities. The Alliance also has tried to stimulate child care in the community during nontraditional hours. An Alliance program now provides extra staff, such as college work-study students, so family child care providers can take in extra children during those few hours when parents who work the second shift need to drop off their children before parents working the first shift have arrived for pickup. (Contact Gail Piggott at (334) 749-8400 for more information.)

- **Portland Bridge Kids Projects**. In 1994 and 1995, the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) worked with the Portland YMCA to provide child care to workers at three major bridge and bypass construction sites. Workers had to pay either $50 per week or 15 percent of their gross wages for child care. The YMCA offered early morning care, evening care, and even

overnight care, depending on when parents were working at the construction site. MDOT also hired an on-site consultant to disseminate information about child care and to encourage additional contractors to adopt similar programs. (Contact Jane Gilbert at (207) 287-3576 for more information.)

Paul's Place. When the ConAgra corporation wanted to attract and retain the best employees in their northwest Arkansas Butterball Turkey plant, managers realized that they needed to help meet the child care needs of their workers. Paul's Place child care center was created through a local partnership headed by ConAgra. Partners include child care providers, Head Start, regional and federal economic development agencies, and the Governor's Office. Half of those served are children of Butterball employees, and the remaining half are children from the community. The center is open extended hours; when parents must work mandatory overtime, including the weekends, care is provided and paid for in full by the company. This commitment to caring for children while parents work helps ConAgra to recruit employees and to make them more focused workers once hired. (Contact Charlie Romeo at (630) 262-4067 for more information.)

Tips for Success

The Child Care Partnership Project has identified the following success tips for creating partnerships that provide child care at nontraditional hours:

Be patient. New child care centers operating during nontraditional hours do not reach capacity quickly. It takes time for the word to spread and for employees to develop confidence in a center, particularly for late night or overnight care.

Find ways to increase family child care capacity. Family child care settings are well suited for night care, especially for very young children. Increasing the capacity of family child care providers to care for children during nontraditional hours can be a cost-effective investment.

Find good staff and pay them well. The quality of staff is crucial to the success of a program. To retain good staff working nontraditional hours, it may be necessary to pay them more than staff working regular hours.

Look to the arts for program options. Museums, dance companies, and other arts organizations are good resources for weekend programs. These organizations may require assistance to turn part-day programs into full-day options, but the programs they offer can enhance the quality of child care services.

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Innovative Approaches:

Partnerships for Provider Education

A child care center or family child care home is only as good as the workers who care for the children. Unfortunately, many child care providers have minimal education and receive little compensation for their work. Low compensation prevents caregivers from seeking further education and creates high levels of turnover. In turn, this compromises the quality of care.

To address these challenges, communities are forming partnerships that marshal resources to educate providers. These education-focused partnerships: strive to ensure that training is tied to higher pay and better benefits; help child care providers find time to participate; make education accessible; and provide on-going follow-up and support to help child care providers translate what they have learned into their daily work with children.

The following initiatives represent a sampling of the many public-private partnerships addressing child care provider education.

- **T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps)**. T.E.A.C.H. started in North Carolina in the late 1980s, when a workforce survey showed that low child care worker wages resulted in high turnover rates. To remedy the problem, the T.E.A.C.H. model ties increased education to compensation. Four principles guide the T.E.A.C.H. model: scholarships, education, compensation, and commitment. The project works with community colleges to create curricula and negotiate community college tuition reductions. Child care centers, parents, foundations, and state governments contribute funds for scholarships and increased provider compensation. Child care providers then commit to stay in their job for a period of time after completing their coursework. This model is so successful that it has been adapted by several states, including New York, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Colorado, and Indiana. (Contact Sue Russell at (919) 967-3272 for more information.)

- **Employer's Child Care Alliance**. A group of concerned employers in rural Alabama formed the Alliance to address regional child care issues, including raising the level of education among providers. Both public and private employers who are part of the Alliance understand the importance of provider education in quality child care and are therefore willing to support efforts to improve caregiver qualifications. The program matches child care centers with employers who provide scholarships for staff development. To encourage completion, staff must pay for and complete various staff education programs; they are then reimbursed for all expenses. (Contact Gail Piggott at (334) 749-8400 for more information.)

- **Michigan Child Care Futures**. The Michigan Child Care Futures project began in 1988 to improve the quality and supply of child care in the state. The project receives funding from the Michigan Family Independence Agency, Michigan Trust Fund for Children with Special Needs, and several Michigan-based foundations and businesses. The project is statewide, but regional offices are responsible for distributing funds. The partnership funds recruitment and training for

child care providers, including family child care, relatives who provide care, child care aides, and other non-regulated providers. One effective strategy that the partnership uses to reach nonregulated providers is to offer a $150 incentive for attending education and skill development programs. (Contact Mark Sullivan at (517) 351-4171 for more information.)

- **North Dakota Infant/Toddler Enrichment Program**. The Infant/Toddler Enrichment Program is designed to improve the quality of care for very young children through the recruitment, training, and retention of infant and toddler caregivers. The core of the program is four 10-hour training sessions that teach the latest in child development theory, research, and practice. In 1994, the North Dakota Department of Human Services received a grant from the Bush Foundation and contracted with WestEd Laboratory to implement the training program. WestEd Laboratory has prepared over 100 North Dakota trainers to teach some or all of the program to caregivers. Some of the child care providers who attended the sessions included representatives from the health care industry, government agencies, foster care agencies, Head Start, Early Head Start, and special education programs. The Bush Foundation has funded similar efforts in Minnesota and South Dakota. (Contact Corinne Bennett at (701) 328-4809 for more information.)

Tips for Success

The Child Care Partnership Project identified the following tips for success from partnerships that support child care provider education:

Tie education to compensation. Partnerships that tie provider training to increased wages and improved benefits, such as the T.E.A.C.H. project, have successfully increased child care quality and decreased provider turnover. Partnerships often find funding for increased provider compensation from child care centers, parents, businesses, state government, or foundations.

Keep focused on outcomes. It is important to have a clear understanding of intended outcomes and to gauge progress toward those outcomes on a regular basis. When partners see results, the partnership maintains momentum.

Keep funders informed. To ensure continued funding, government agencies, businesses, and other funders need to know about successes in reaching and educating providers. They also need to see how these programs translate into better care and education for children. Partnerships that provide regular reports on successes improve their chances for future funding.

Find permanent funding. A sustainable funding source is necessary to boost provider compensation over the long run. Therefore, document results and keep funders informed to cultivate a permanent funding source.

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Innovative Approaches:

Business Roundtables, Coalitions, and Commissions

The stronger the economy, the more difficult it becomes to attract and retain the best employees. An employer who can offer the added benefit of child care and other family-friendly policies has a better chance of keeping valued employees. Regardless of the strength of the economy, when working parents have child care problems, their employers have problems too. If employees' child care arrangements fall apart due to school vacations, ill children, or child care provider turnover, employees can be absent, late to work, or distracted when they arrive. This costs employers real dollars in lost time and productivity. For all these reasons, businesses have a vital interest in the child care arrangements of their employees.

Yet it can be difficult and costly to develop family-friendly policies and programs. As a result, businesses are coming together to find solutions on a community-, city-, or statewide basis. Employers are taking action by forming roundtables, coalitions, or commissions. Government is also convening groups of business executives, such as U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin's Working Group on Child Care, and New Hampshire Governor Jeanne Shaheen's Business Commission on Child Care.

The following examples show how business roundtables, coalitions, and commissions vary in the strategies that they employ to increase the supply of high-quality child care.

- **Texas Employer Coalition Initiatives**. The Texas Work and Family Clearinghouse, a government entity, created an initiative that brings employers together to focus on child care issues among their employees and in their communities. The initiative currently operates in seven cities; it began with regional conferences in each site designed to pool resources, share information, and establish a local plan of action for the employer coalition. Each local coalition received an initial planning grant from the state to encourage this process, and communities applied for additional grants after they had defined their agendas. The Clearinghouse also supports three additional employer coalitions that existed prior to the initiative and that serve as role models for the new coalitions. (Contact Carol McDaniel at (512) 936-3226 for more information.)

- **Florida's Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP)**. An executive board of business CEOs, members of the child care community, and state government administrators oversee Florida's $6 million effort to increase child care subsidy funding by matching, dollar-for-dollar, employer contributions. In 1998, thirty-five businesses contributed in one of two ways. An employer may subsidize its own employees, which automatically moves the employee off the child care subsidy waiting list, or the employer may make a charitable donation to a purchasing pool that funds child care subsidies for families in the community. In addition to providing funding, the CCEP board has become a new messenger in the campaign to raise awareness of child care issues. The board is active in reviewing existing policies and making recommendations on how to improve child care licensing, coordinate child care and pre-kindergarten programs, and encourage family-friendly workplaces. (Contact Susan Muenchow at (850) 681-7002 for more information.)

- **Employer's Child Care Alliance**. The Employer's Child Care Alliance began in Lee County, Alabama, when a group of employers attended a symposium on family-friendly benefits. After meeting several times, the group found that there were enough shared child care concerns to

warrant joining forces to meet the needs of working families in the area. In 1995, members invited other area employers from both the public and private sectors to join the alliance and anticipate in a county-wide employee child care needs survey. Based on this survey, the Alliance developed an action plan and hired its first director to implement the plan. Alliance members provide the majority of the funding for programs, such as child care centers and school-age child care options. (Contact Gail Piggott at (334) 749-8400 for more information.)

- **Colorado Business Commission on Child Care Financing**. In 1995, the Governor of Colorado appointed members to the Business Commission in order to look at child care issues from a business perspective and to propose ideas for financing affordable, accessible, high-quality child care in Colorado. The bipartisan Commission included members from the private sector, such as private universities, banks, labor, unions, airlines, and other businesses. After reviewing successful models from other states and communities, the Commission came up with a series of recommendations for improving child care financing in Colorado. As a result of the Commission's work, the state established child care tax credits for families and employers, as well as a voluntary tax checkoff that allows Colorado taxpayers to donate up to $5 of their state tax refunds to a statewide child care quality improvement fund. (Contact Sam Williams at (303) 892-3873 for more information.)

Tips for Success

The Child Care Partnership Project has identified the following lessons from successful business roundtables, coalitions, and commissions.

Let employers lead. Successful employer coalitions depend on employers taking the leadership role. This leadership allows the agenda to reflect the priorities of the members and encourages other businesses to participate.

Design an appropriate structure for the partnership. In order to ensure smooth operations, roundtables, coalitions, and commissions need a well-articulated structure. This structure must reflect the needs of the partners while respecting their diversity. Effective governance structures define the various roles that partners will play and ensure that all partners understand and accept these roles. Many partnerships create written plans that include the roles and responsibilities of each partner, or use written contracts or memoranda of understanding to define roles. The process of defining partner roles and responsibilities usually occurs after the partnership creates a shared mission and articulates its goals.

Involve CEOs and other business champions early in the process. The people who make decisions in the boardroom must be at the table from the beginning of the partnership. Early involvement is critical in order to ensure that goals and strategies reflect the best thinking of all involved and that all participants feel that they truly have a stake in the partnership.

For More Information.

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Innovative Approaches:

School-Age Child Care Partnerships

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 1997 24 million school-age children had one or more parents in the workforce. Many of these children arrive home from school to an empty house and spend several hours a day without parental supervision because parents have few options for after-school care. Most communities do not provide enough after-school programs, and only 30 percent of schools have extended learning options. This situation worsens as children leave elementary schools. Middle and high school students have fewer after-school options and tend to engage in riskier behavior; the majority of youth crime occurs between 2:00 and 6:00 in the afternoon. In order to expand resources for school-age programs, states and communities are forming public-private partnerships.

Challenges for these partnerships include convincing local leaders and policymakers of the importance of school-age care and making these programs age-appropriate. Quality school-age programming must provide a range of options and activities to engage kindergartners and high school students alike. Programs face the problem of finding facilities that are available before and after school, as well as during the summer months and school vacations. Schools provide an ideal setting, but school districts are often reluctant to get involved. The following initiatives represent a sampling of public-private partnerships that focus on school-age child care.

- **Beacons Initiative**. The Beacons Initiative was created in New York City by the Mayor's Office. The program uses school buildings to provide programming to mostly middle-school-age children during non-school hours. Program sites stay open a minimum of 42 hours a week, with most sites operating daily from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. Sites must also be open at least one weekend day during school holidays and summer vacations. The New York City Department of Education provides funds to pay for the use of school buildings. Additional funding for these programs is provided by foundations and local businesses. The program provides academic enrichment, recreational opportunities, school-to-work transition, counseling and supportive services, leadership development, community service, and parental and intergenerational involvement. (Contact Jenny Soller-MacIntosh at (212) 676-8255 for more information.)

- **The MOST Initiative**. Making the Most of Out-of-School Time (MOST), is funded by the DeWitt Wallace–Reader's Digest Fund and supported by the Wellesley College National Institute on Out-of-School Time. Its efforts focus on improving the quality and accessibility of school-age care, especially for low-income families. The goals of the initiative are to increase awareness of the need for out-of-school care, increase the number of children served, and assist with program start-up and improvement. Three cities—Boston, Chicago, and Seattle—have received grants under this initiative. The cities have engaged a host of public and private partners to adapt the principles of MOST to their own environment. (Contact Joyce Shortt at (781) 283-2526 for more information.)

- **Save the Children Rural Initiative**. Save the Children provides technical assistance and training to help promote school-age care in rural settings. Save the Children works with public schools and private service providers to link schools and communities through a variety of programs. The initiative is based on a set of core principles, one of which is that meeting children's needs

outside of the classroom can have a real impact on their performance inside the classroom. Another principle is working with parents through programs such as literacy training to connect families to schools. (Contact An-Me Chung at (781) 283-3497 for more information.)

- **LA's BEST**. LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow) is a Los Angeles after-school program that provides meals, organized sports, arts, culture, and other programs to 5,000 children in 24 sites. Private partners raise funds to purchase equipment such as computers and VCRs for out-of-school time programs. The program, which is housed mainly in schools, pays custodial fees to keep buildings open after hours. Just as LA's BEST benefits from being able to use the schools, schools benefit from being able to use the equipment purchased for the LA's BEST programs. (Call Carla Sanger at (213) 847-3681 for more information.)

- **PlusTime New Hampshire**. PlusTime New Hampshire was created by the state to address the lack of organized efforts to establish programs focused on school-age children. PlusTime New Hampshire is now a nonprofit organization that provides grants and technical assistance to communities that are attempting to organize out-of-school time programs. PlusTime works with community organizations, area residents, and individual parents to mobilize local public and private resources and leaders to start a local school-age program. This system creates community-based initiatives that give parents significant control over the programming. (Contact Cynthia Billings at (603) 798-5860 for more information.)

Tips for Success

The Child Care Partnership Project identified the following tips for success from a wide variety of school-age child care partnerships.

Work constructively with school districts. The most successful out-of-school partnerships find ways of working with local school districts. When schools feel that they can benefit from the program, then they are more likely to cooperate.

Get input from youth. Young people should have a say in how the initiative is run and what services it provides. When youth have input, they are more likely to participate.

Involve the larger community in the planning process. Community involvement builds ownership in the program. Diverse viewpoints help to ensure that the community needs are met and that the program is successful.

Engage law enforcement as allies in securing resources and support for school-age programs. Law enforcement officials are becoming an effective voice in advocating for out-of-school time programs as a crime prevention strategy. They can help convince policymakers of the need for and benefits of these programs and services.

For More Information:

This information was developed as part of the Child Care Partnership Project, a multiyear technical assistance effort funded by the Child Care Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Partnership Project is producing a series of technical assistance resources and materials to support the development and strengthening of public-private partnerships to improve the quality and supply of child care. All materials will be available through the National Child Care Information Center at http://nccic.org/ccpartnerships or by phone at (800) 616-2242. For more information on the project, please contact The Finance Project at (202) 628-4200.

Innovative Approaches:

Partnerships to Support Statewide System Development

Child care resources vary dramatically from community to community. The availability of quality care also is a function of the local business climate, the urban or rural nature of a community, and the diversity of the workforce needing services. Some states seeking to systematically improve access to affordable, quality care are supporting community-based, public-private partnerships in building their own capacity, wherever it is needed. By establishing structures that provide resources and know-how, states can build child care systems community by community.

Authorized by legislation or state agency directives, these statewide initiatives typically use funding, technical assistance, or other incentives to set up system-building efforts that involve diverse partners, identify broad goals, and ensure both program and fiscal accountability. Funding for these efforts can be allocated by a state legislature, drawn from the federal Child Care and Development Fund, or generated by blending or redeploying existing federal, state, or local funds. In many cases, states require a matching contribution by the private sector.

States also are providing or supporting technical assistance to develop successful state-community partnerships. Such technical assistance may be provided or funded by a state agency, employers, or other private-sector partners. Typically, it focuses on: mobilizing communities (convening broad stakeholder groups, and creating visions, goals, strategies, and ways to measure progress and results); conducting statewide or local needs assessments; increasing the availability and/or improving the quality of early childhood programs; and creating financing mechanisms for systems of programs and services. The following states represent a sample of statewide system-building partnerships.

- **Florida.** Florida's Department of Education allocates $3 million annually for Early Childhood Collaboration Grants. Each county receives funds to promote collaboration among Head Start, pre-kindergarten, and private child care providers. (Contact Susan Muenchow at (850) 681-7002 for more information.)

- **Indiana.** The Indiana Child Care Symposium Initiative supports local teams of business, community, and child care leaders who come together to address local child care issues. The state facilitates technical assistance, such as linking business mentors to local teams. Most teams conduct needs assessments to determine the best way to define their project goals. In 1998, the state allocated $6 million from the Child Care and Development Fund to finance and provide technical assistance to local teams. (Contact Carole Stein at (317) 232-1148 for more information.)

- **Michigan.** The Michigan Child Care Futures Project assists local Child Care Coordinating Council (4-C) agencies to train and recruit child care providers in order to improve child care quality. The Project works with a wide range of community partners, including businesses and foundations, universities and community colleges, hospitals, and school districts to develop and disseminate training curricula, provide education, and offer support services to child care providers throughout the state. (Contact Mark Sullivan at (517) 351-4171 for more information.)

- **North Carolina.** The North Carolina Partnership for Children (Smart Start) fosters collaboration and systemic change through county-level partnerships to ensure that children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. The state-level partnership provides technical assistance to local partnerships on program development, administration, organizational development, communication, fiscal management, technology, contract management, and fundraising. State revenues fund local partnerships, and state government agencies assist local partnerships in accessing federal funds that are available to support their efforts. Partnerships are mandated by the General Assembly to raise one private dollar for every $10 they receive in state funding. County-level partnerships must have broad-based community participation, and are charged with creating and implementing plans and services for all of North Carolina's young children and their families. (Contact Monica Harris at (919) 821-7999 for more information.)

- **Texas.** The Texas Work and Family Clearinghouse, created by the state legislature to help attract and maintain a diverse workforce, acts as an information broker on work and family issues for employers and professional consultants working in the field. It also helps create employer coalitions that work with local organizations to assess community needs and develop strategies for meeting those needs. The Clearinghouse uses state funding to provide grants to establish partnerships that expand dependent care services, and then provides technical assistance to local employer coalitions to help build and sustain their partnerships. (Contact Carol McDaniel at (512) 936-3226 for more information.)

Tips for Success

The Child Care Partnership Project has identified the following tips for success, based on the experiences of states working to build partnerships to improve local child care.

Build on local infrastructure. Many states already have locally based structures that can support statewide initiatives, such as resource and referral agency networks, cooperative extension services, or county commissions. Building on existing structures allows an initiative to get a head start on organizing and planning by taking advantage of preexisting groups of partners.

Involve the community in planning. The success of local initiatives depends on broad community involvement. When diverse partners are involved at the ground level in developing goals and objectives, they develop motivation and commitment, and are more likely to stay actively involved.

Share information and lessons learned. Across the country, local communities organizing to improve services for children face similar challenges. States can play an important role in making resources and information available to assist local efforts. This may include supporting peer networks, holding conferences to showcase promising partnerships, and funding local efforts.

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